

14 March 1966

Approved For Release 2005/01/11 : CIA-RDP88-01315R000300160009-6

The Freedom Studies Center

Senators Dodd, Mundt, Douglas and Proxmire are among many congressional advocates of a U.S. sponsored Freedom Academy who also encourage private citizen initiative in the same area. "Since governments move so slowly," says Senator Thomas Dodd, "it is my conviction that an effort should be made on a private basis to make serious cold war education more generally available than it is today, to all those who can make use of it."

Forty-two senior members of the Congress and ten state governors serve on the Advisory Board for the Freedom Studies Center, a privately financed "freedom academy" soon to be launched. The Center recently acquired a 671-acre estate-campus near Culpeper, Virginia, one and one-half hours from Washington, D. C. Some initial courses for members of congressional staffs are scheduled for late summer 1966.

The Freedom Studies Center is administered by the Institute for American Strategy, Chicago, with the cooperation of forty other organizations, many of which are universities. It is 100% privately financed by foundations, corporations and individuals.

Pro and Con Voices

Whether privately or officially sponsored, any move by the American people to seriously challenge the Lenin Institute pattern for global political warfare training will trigger characteristic Sino-Soviet reactions. After denouncing such an Academy as "a provocative cold war aggression," the Communist world will probably find it as handy a permanent propaganda target as the CIA. That possibility has struck some administration worriers as sufficient reason for opposing the idea. However, it is anticipated that the legislation proposing a government-operated academy will get serious consideration from President Johnson, despite long-standing State Department resistance. Secretary of State Dean Rusk is not himself responsible for that resistance. In a 1963 conference with this reporter, he revealed an open-minded unawareness of the scope and purpose of the legislation his department had been officially opposing for years.

Many individuals in the Department quietly endorse the Freedom Academy concept. Among those emphatically advocating it before congressional committees were such foreign service veterans as Adolf A. Berle and Robert C. Hill, former ambassador to three Latin American nations. A total of 59 witnesses familiar with cold war problems have testified in favor of the bill at congressional hearings. The only opposition voices were those of Walt W. Rostow and W. Averill Harriman, both of whom revealed a misunderstanding of the purpose and scope of the bills under consideration.

Whatever the outcome of the pending legislation, it becomes increasingly clear that the American people must begin to build a more adequate political defense structure for the Free World. A substantial part of the foundation for such a structure can be provided by a "freedom academy," official or private.

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